2: Emeneau L-5 (1936-1937) 1938
AW5 Coorg AW5

585
[515] [602] wives, but not his brothers' wives, unless they are much older than himself,[1] must pour over him one pot of water each. After this he is arrayed in full Coorg dress, including the turban, dagger, and sword, and puts on heavy bangles and neck-chains. His long coat (kupia) should be white, as all such garments were anciently. The bride likewise is bathed by women and girls from among her relatives, no one being barred from this office except widows. She is dressed in her best sari and headcloth and decorated with a great number of ornaments, toe and finger rings, earrings, necklaces and chains, and hair-ornaments. When the guests have all arrived in the early morning (all wearing Coorg dress, though the men need not wear white coats), the bride and groom in their respective houses are brought forth into the nellaki. Each is wearing in addition to their full dress a cloth over the head, the bride's covering her face but left unfastened in front. Each, conducted by a near relative or friend of the same sex (in the man's case frequently the husband of his sister, in the woman's the wife of her brother), circles three times in clockwise direction a stool between two standing lamps and then is seated facing to the east on the stool, which has been covered with a cloth. The nellaki was anciently the place for the ceremony; at present it often takes place in the yard of the house in a pandal built for the occasion and fitted with the stool and two standing lamps, but not with a hanging lamp. This shift of scene is due to the fact that the house is frequently too small to accommodate all the guests. During the ceremony four Coorg musicians beat on drums and sing the wedding song (this I hope to present and discuss linguistically elsewhere).

[515] [602] [292] [301] [292] [342] [778] [178] [533]

When the central figure of the ceremony is seated, his or her mother, or if the mother is dead or a widow, the eldest married woman in the sib who is not a widow, stands in front of him or her. She takes from a large flat plate of rice a handful and throws some first to the hanging lamp, apparently as an offering to the ancestors of the sib (if the ceremony is outside in the pandal, this is omitted), then over her head towards the sun;

[614] [782]

[1] Younger ones are said to be restrained by shyness, but the fact is that they are women who are referred to as macini and are possible spouses of the man, in case they should be widowed and he should become a widower. Such relatives of a man, viz. all those whom he classes as macini and mamnā, whether they are blood-relations (i.e. cross-cousins) or related merely by marriage, are the subjects of taboos with relation to him. They begin to operate when both parties have attained puberty. They may not touch one another, except in case of real necessity, nor may they sit on the same bench. Other specific taboos operating between these cross-cousins seem to be lacking, since in general Coorg men and women observe about the same taboos in speech and action that are observed in polite circles in western society. The specific taboos do not operate between any other classes or relatives; it may be observed that the taboo on touching is merely a very small extension of the usual reluctance of a Coorg man to touch a woman.

[607] [605] [834]

596 [607] [173] [578] generally well guarded in the use of proper expressions in their talk with the young. The educated men of the present day exercise a potent influence for good in the normal conversation, and show due respect to their brother's wife with whom no familiarity is allowed. There is a tendency at present among the discontented members to break up the ancestral family by a division of the family property among the members.

Property and Disposal

423 425 177 The property of the Coorgs consists chiefly of the ancestral house and the land belonging to it which under the Rajas was held on a feudal tenure and on a light assessment termed *jamma bhumi* or birthright land, because it was inalienably vested in the family or house, and the British Government confirmed the settlement. Additional land was taken up by them on the *sagu* tenure, but, in course of time, Government allowed to some extent such *sagu* land to be converted into *jamma* land. Other land held as jagir was granted for certain Government service as *umbli* land on a light assessment. During the last thirty years, many houses have opened out coffee plantations on their own or Government land, or rented cardamom jungles. Thus the actual wealth of the Coorgs consists of landed property and their prosperity depends on the exertions and means of cultivation; but imprudent enterprises and unexpected reverses have caused much embarrassment. Formerly, all the members of a Coorg house lived together in the ancestral home or in some outfarm, *koppu*, neither of which could be alienated nor subdivided among the members of the family. All of them worked for the common good under the management of the *yajamana* or *korakara*, and had their subsistence on the proceeds. Any surplus on the annual reckoning became the property of the house for providing incidental expenditure on the occasion of marriages, funerals, and other ceremonies, as also for the purchase of new land in the interest of the family. If, however, an individual member by becoming a salaried officer or by coming into possession of money through marriage, was enabled to enter upon private speculation without any aid from the ancestral house, any property or acquirements thus made became his private property and were left at his own disposal by gift or will. Many young men have thus become separated from the ancestral house and established a new homestead, and as long as they contributed to the expenses of the former, they maintained their share in the proceeds. This is the proper mode of setting up a new house. Disintegration is now setting in, and some try to break up the ancestral houses by a division of the landed property among the members.

434 421 596 [556] [433] [591] [182]

Adoption

597 The right of adoption is given to every Coorg house in the absence of male issue, or by an unmarried man or woman or widower in order to secure the inheritance of personal property or rights.